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STAFF REPORT

FIRST RESIDENCE DISTRICT STUDY

JUNE 30, 1960

NEWARK CENTRAL

PLANNING BOARD

MISC

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## I. THE PROBLEM

The Newark Central Planning Board has requested its staff to conduct a study of First Residence Zoning Districts in Newark in order to determine whether any changes should be made at this time in the existing regulations which govern First Residence Districts. In addition, this request has been prompted both by the numerous individual applications for permission to convert one-family structures to multi-family uses, and a group request by residents of Forest Hill for a rezoning study.

## II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The staff conducted field surveys of all the existing First Residence Districts (see Map I) and checked as well as supplemented their observations with data of record.\*

The study determined that there exists many houses in First Residence Districts containing nine, ten, eleven and more rooms. The large size of the majority of these structures indicates that in many instances maintenance of these buildings as one family houses may cause considerable economic hardship. Furthermore, when proper maintenance ceases, buildings tend to become blighted and surrounding property values depreciate. Where the zoning ordinance permits conversions, many large homes in Newark have been converted to multi-family structures; these conversions, in many instances, contributing to the stability of the neighborhood.

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\*1-Land use data  
2-Appraisal reports  
3-Rent control records  
4-Board of Adjustment records

In First Residence Districts, however, such conversion is not legally permitted. Heating expenses and taxes have raised the operating cost of these large structures to the point where desired maintenance in certain instances becomes burdensome to the single-family occupant (see Table I). In many instances, these structures have been allowed to deteriorate. In addition, there are examples in First Residence Districts of illegal conversions for rental purposes to two-family, multi-family, and rooming house uses. Houses also are frequently put up for sale.

We have made a selected study of the tax assessments in those areas which are proposed for conversion districts and compared these with nearby Second Residence District figures. The average assessments for these areas are as follows:

TABLE I

1st Residence Tax Assessment			2nd Residence	2nd Residence Tax Assessments Per Unit	
				2 Units	3 Units
Forest Hill	A	686.92	627.50	313.75	209.17
Vailsburg	A	539.58	504.86	252.43	168.28
Clinton Hill	A	613.19	603.00	301.50	201.00
Weequahic	C	641.22	618.05	309.03	206.01

These figures indicate the degree of financial hardship between the two types of residential districts. It should be further emphasized that a random selection of the 2nd districts showed a number of buildings which were taxed low because of the Veterans' reduction. These properties were not figured in the averages. If they had been, the differential would have been even greater.

The staff survey showed that some First Residence Districts had a greater tendency toward deterioration and economic pressure for conversion than others. In the hope of preventing any further deterioration of these areas, the possibility of allowing conversions in them was evaluated in terms of the criteria outlined in Section V of this report.

It is for these problem areas that an amendment to the zoning ordinance is herein proposed. This amendment would create a First Residence Conversion District, which would give home owners therein an option to convert to two-family use. The amendment sets stringent standards under which conversions might legally be carried out in order to minimize the deleterious effect on the single family character of the neighborhoods.

There are, however, several First Residence Districts in Newark which are presently free of economic pressures for conversion. It is suggested that these stable one-family areas, where hardship is an apparent exception, be retained in First Residence Zoning without the option to convert. It is further suggested that by the rigid enforcement of the existing zoning, housing, and building codes, the stability of these residential areas will be increased and protected.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

TABLE 11

	Clinton Hill			Forest Hill		Vailsburg				Weequahic		
	A	B	C	A	B	A	B	C	D	A	B	C
Number of Residential Structures	75	108	179	176	503	488	263	469	409	323	70	128
Number of One-Family Structures	60	75	143	145	495	284	224	429	335	290	63	121
Number More Than One Family	15	33	36	31	8	204	39	40	74	33	7	7
Number of Registered Rooming Houses	8	8	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
% More Than One Family	20.0	30.6	20.1	17.6	1.6	41.8	14.8	8.5	.19	10.2	10	5.5

The First Residence Districts for which conversion zoning is proposed are: Clinton Hill "A", Clinton Hill "B", and Clinton Hill "C", Forest Hill "A" and the eastern portion of Forest Hill "B", Vailsburg "B" and Vailsburg "D", and Weequahic "B" and "C".  
(See Map I for locations.)

The First Residence Districts for which no zoning change is recommended are the western portion of Forest Hill "B", Vailsburg "C" and Weequahic "A".

Because of the existing number of conversions, the structural age and condition, it is recommended that Vailsburg "A" be rezoned to a Second Residence District.

A description of the boundary lines of each district may be found in Section VI of this report.

#### IV. ALTERNATE REZONING PROPOSALS

There are several alternatives to solving the problems, as stated, within the existing First Residence Districts:

A. The city can maintain the existing First Residence zones. To prevent deterioration in these areas, it will be necessary to vigorously enforce the zoning regulations and housing code to prevent conversion to multi-family and rooming house uses, as well as enforce the maintenance of structures. Those structures already converted to more than one family occupancy will have to be converted back.

This approach cannot ensure the high level of maintenance desired in a single-family district; at best, it can only delay a change. The rising maintenance cost of aged structures will only magnify the future problems. No degree of code enforcement, furthermore, can eliminate the subtle violations that will exist in the areas where economic pressures for conversion continue.

B. The city can change the First Residence Districts where pressures exist to Second Residence Districts. This change would permit two and three family structures and require a lot area of 1,500 square feet for each family. Conversion of any structure within these limitations could not be prevented. It is improbable, however, that the single family character of the areas could be maintained with this change in zone.

C. A third proposal, and the one recommended by this study, is the creation of a district which would permit the conversion only to two family use. Rooming houses would not be

permitted. In order to be converted, each structure would need 2,500 square feet of land area per family or 5,000 square feet of lot area as required in First Residence Districts. This compares with 1,500 square feet of lot area per family in Second Residence Districts. No restrictions need be made for minimum size of structures; the average size of over nine rooms per structure indicates adequate size for conversion. The creation and occupancy of these new dwellings would be governed by Section 15.525 (n)2 as well as the building and housing codes of the City of Newark.<sup>1</sup> In addition, an off-street parking space on the same lot would be required for each dwelling unit.

This proposal would enable home owners, where they felt economic circumstances warranted, to convert their homes to two family dwelling units, with the minimum effect on the character of the neighborhood. As previously discussed, a suggested amendment to effect this proposal is presented in Section VII of this report.

#### V. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING DISTRICTS

The decision of whether or not to recommend a district for rezoning was made according to the following criteria:

##### A. Characteristics of affected structures as to:

1. size; number of rooms
2. condition; standard and substandard structures and dwelling units
3. lot area; lot coverage
4. ability to accommodate additional off-street parking spaces

<sup>1</sup>Section 15.525(m)2 states: "It shall be the responsibility and duty of the owner (of a dwelling unit) not to permit the use or occupancy of any dwelling or dwelling unit unless the following minimum standard for overall floor area per dwelling unit is complied with: 150 square feet for a family of one; 250 square feet for a family of two; 350 square feet for a family of three; 450 square feet for a family of four and 75 square feet for each additional person."



5. economic feasibility of conversion
6. aesthetic implications of conversion

B. Characteristics of neighborhood as to:

1. extent of legal and illegal non-conforming uses within districts
2. existing land uses contiguous to districts
3. urban renewal plans which might affect area
4. population shifts which will increase or decrease the size, quantity, and type of demand for residential structures
5. neighborhood physical quality
6. existing traffic volumes, transportation patterns and parking facilities and affect on these of zoning change
7. environmental factors (adequacy of shopping, recreation, schools, etc.)
8. aesthetic implications of conversions

C. Taxes and land values

D. Capacity of sewers to handle an increased population

VI. ANALYSIS OF FIRST RESIDENCE DISTRICTS

This study, particularly in Forest Hill, has revealed that the Division of Sewers is very concerned with the recent proposals for the construction of high density apartment houses. Future sewer needs beyond present effluent capacities could precipitate a critical condition in this area. This problem is worthy of further consideration by the Board, inasmuch as the determination of densities is to a large extent influenced by zoning practice.

A. Clinton Hill First Residence Districts:

Within the Clinton Hill community of Newark there are three areas currently zoned for First Residence use, designated as "A", "B", and "C" on accompanying Map I.

1. Clinton Hill "A"—Recommendation: First Residence Conversion

The area proposed for rezoning is that portion of the First Residential District bounded by the rear lot lines of

structures on Clinton Avenue, Hawthorne Avenue, Girard and Fabyan Places. Girard Place and Randolph Place are not proposed for rezoning. The existing characteristics of the area are summarized as follows:

TABLE III

Number of residential structures-----	75
Single family structures-----	60
Two family structures-----	13
Three family structures-----	2
Rooming houses-----	8*
Number of dwelling units (excluding rooming houses)-----	92
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	3
Legal non-conforming uses-----	2
Legal variances-----	2
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	3
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	7
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	63
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	2

\*Were not observed in field survey, but are registered rooming houses.

2. Clinton Hill "B". Recommendation: First Residence Conversion

The area proposed for rezoning is the entire First Residence District between Millington Avenue, rear lot line of structures on Mairn Place, rear lot line of structures on Clinton Avenue and rear lot line of structures on Van Ness Place. The existing characteristics of the area are summarized as follows:

TABLE IV

Number of residential structures-----	108
Single family structures-----	75
Two family structures-----	19
Three family structures-----	6
Rooming houses-----	8
Number of dwelling units (excluding rooming houses)-----	168
Average number of rooms-----	10.4
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	10
Legal non-conforming uses-----	3
Legal variances-----	2
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	23
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	17
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	43
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	25

### 3. Clinton Hill "C"-Recommendation: First Residence Conversion

The area proposed for rezoning is the entire First Residence District between the rear lot line of structures on South 13th Street, Madison Avenue, rear lot line of structures on South 11th Street, rear lot line of structures on Madison Avenue, rear lot line of structures on Lincoln Avenue and rear lot line of structures on Clinton Avenue. The existing characteristics of the area are summarized as follows:

TABLE V

Number of residential structures-----	179
Single family structures-----	143
Two family structures-----	21
Three family structures-----	10
Rooming houses-----	5
Number of dwelling units (excluding rooming houses)-----	324
Average number of rooms-----	10.8
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	32
Legal non-conforming uses-----	11
Legal variances-----	0
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	43
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	49
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	51
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	36

Clinton Hill Neighborhood Characteristics (General)

Schools

Elementary schools affected in Clinton Hill are the Avon Avenue and the Madison Avenue Schools and two schools in adjoining Veequahic; Hawthorne Avenue and Bragaw Avenue. Schools in Clinton Hill are crowded. Elementary school enrollment in this community has risen within the last several years. Many of the residential structures of the community are now housing more families with children because of the steady population immigration in this area. The affect of these residential conversions, while most obvious on the Bergen Street School which does not directly serve the First Residence Districts, is typical of the entire community.

The most recent school construction in Clinton Hill was the Clinton Place Junior High School. Its wide service area, however, does not effectively alleviate the total demand for school facilities. There has been consideration of new elementary school facilities in Clinton Hill in conjunction with the urban renewal project. Despite the civic agitation to replace the antiquated facilities, there are no immediate plans in the capital improvements budget for a school; however, considerable study is being given this area by the Board of Education for possible new school needs.

Shopping

The principal shopping area in Clinton Hill is along Clinton Avenue, at Bergen Street, down the hill from the First Residence Districts. The hill itself and the lack of off-street parking facilities (except for the recently completed parking area

at the edge of the commercial section) are deterrents to the potential growth and "pulling power" of the Clinton Avenue commercial frontage. Upper Clinton Avenue has a number of local convenience stores. Elsewhere in the area are smaller clusters of stores on Avon Avenue, Hawthorne Avenue and Clinton Place. The shopping situation, while not ideal, presents no serious problem for a population expansion.

B. Forest Hill First Residence Districts:

Within Forest Hill are two areas currently zoned for First Residence use, designated as "A" and "B". (See Map I.)

1. Forest Hill "A" - Recommendation: First Residence Conversion

Boundaries of the area proposed for rezoning: the area between Elwood Avenue and Montclair Avenue, except for a one hundred foot strip along Elwood Avenue, between DeGraw Avenue and the rear lot line of properties on the east side of Highland Avenue.

The Elwood Avenue strip would provide a buffer between the new zone and the First Residence Zone. The existing characteristics of the area are summarized as follows:

TABLE VI

Number of residential structures-----	176
Single family structures-----	115
Two family structures-----	19
Three family structures-----	10
Rooming houses-----	2
Number of dwelling units (excluding rooming houses)-----	216
Average number of rooms-----	6.5
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	9
Legal non-conforming uses-----	2
Legal variances-----	2
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	20
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	6
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	93
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	57

Shopping facilities used by any residents of the Forest Hill Area are concentrated along Mt. Prospect Avenue between Elwood Avenue and Heller Parkway. This area becomes congested during optimum shopping periods when the volume of cars exceeds the available curb space. One lot, on the Acme Market site, north of Heller Parkway on the westerly side of Mt. Prospect Avenue, offers some relief. School facilities appear at present to be adequate, and the proposed conversions do not indicate that any undue pressure would be exerted upon the existing schools. However, the enrollments within the area should be considered in the event that any extensive new multi-type building construction is permitted.

The minor shopping areas at the intersection of Second Avenue and Mt. Prospect Avenue, and the few stores located opposite Abington Avenue and the easterly side of Mt. Prospect Avenue, also serve sections of the First Residence areas in Forest Hill.

2. Forest Hill "B" - Recommendation:

Eastern Portion: First Residence Conversion  
Western Portion: First Residence No Change

The entire existing First Residence District between Elwood Avenue and Second Avenue; between La'e Street and Clifton Avenue (westerly line) and a 100-foot strip along the easterly line of Clifton Avenue between Abington Avenue and Elwood Avenue, has the following characteristics:

TABLE VII

Number of residential structures-----	503
Single family structures-----	495
Two family structures-----	6
Three family structures-----	2
Rooming houses-----	0
Number of dwelling units-----	528
Average number of rooms-----	9.5
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	31
Legal non-conforming uses-----	8
Legal variances-----	0
Lot sizes:	
Under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	15
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	16
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	278
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	194

Data developed in office and field studies indicates that the western part of this area along Branch Brook Park is stable and still short of full development as a one family residential neighborhood, while the eastern portion along Clifton Avenue is subject to increasing blight and pressure for conversion. It is suggested, therefore, that the virtually intact one family character of the western portion of this area, which is almost uniformly well maintained, be preserved by prohibiting conversions west of the midblock line between Ridge Street and Parker Street.

The essential character of the area is that of the stably maintainable properties fronting on the north-south streets in long blocks. East of the midblock line between Ridge Street and Parker Street, however, conversion may be permitted because of notably greater proportions of structures of obsolete size along Clifton Avenue and Ridge Street.

### C. Vailsburg First Residence Districts:

Within Vailsburg are four areas currently zoned for First Residence use, designated as "A", "B", "C", and "D". (See Map 1.)

#### 1. Vailsburg "A" - Recommendation: Second Residence District

Rezone to Second Residence the entire existing First Residence District bounded generally on the east by Vermont Avenue, from the Irvington line to a westerly line 100 feet south of and parallel to South Orange Avenue, then a southerly line 100 feet west of Alexander Street to a easterly line north of 18th Avenue to the Irvington line.

TABLE VIII

Number of residential structures-----	488
Single family structures-----	281
Two family structures-----	133
Three family structures-----	63
Rooming houses-----	0
Number of dwelling units-----	792
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	0
Legal non-conforming uses-----	0
Legal variances-----	13
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	(281) "
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	( 41) "
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	( 48) "
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	( 17) "

"Incomplete, for tax maps have not yet been redrawn for this area.

Area "A" has mixed residential types. Although one family residences predominate, there are many structures of other types. There are flagrant examples of poor subdivision into blocks and lots, which are of odd sizes and shapes. A high percentage of the lots are small, comprising less than 4,000 square feet.



Quality of construction and maintenance varies considerably, yet is seldom either exceptionally good or bad. The area is modestly middle income.

Major existing features of the neighborhood include a small park at West End Avenue and Laurel Place, the Vailsburg Branch Library and the Alexander Street School. There are several mid-block lanes which are neglected and unkept. If they were redesigned and extended as pedestrian ways, they could connect these facilities to promote or aid unity within the neighborhood.

2. Vailsburg "B" - Recommendation: First Residence  
Conversion

The entire existing First Residence District bounded generally by lines parallel to and 100 feet from the following: east of Sandford Avenue, south of 18th Avenue, west of Stuyvesant Avenue, then bounded by Ivy Street and Stuyvesant Avenue to the Irvington line and along same to the point or origin 100 feet east of Sandford Avenue, is suitable for conversion zoning.

TABLE IX

Number of residential structures-----	263
Single family structures-----	221
Two family structures-----	19
Three family structures-----	17
Rooming houses-----	0
Number of dwelling units-----	343
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	0
Legal non-conforming uses-----	0
Legal variances-----	14
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	136
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	75
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	21
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	13

Essentially a good area with stable non-conforming uses of long standing. The structures are essentially one family, those which are not were designed and constructed for their present use.

3. Vailsburg "C" - Recommendation: First Residence -  
No Conversion

The entire existing First Residence District bounded generally by Ivy Hill Park, the South Orange line, Sinclair Terr. and a line in imaginary extension thereof to Dover Street, a line 100 feet north of and parallel to Cameron Road, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Richelieu Terr., a line in imaginary extension of Noll Place, Richelieu Terr., Helen Place, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Sandford Avenue, Varsity Road, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Merrigan Blvd., a line 100 feet north of and parallel to Ivy Street, a line 100 feet east of and parallel to Mor an Road, a line 300 feet south of and parallel to Merdbine Avenue, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Morran Road, a line 100 feet south of and parallel to Mt. Vernon Place, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Tuxedo Parkway to Ivy Hill Park at point of origin, should not be changed.

TABLE X

Number of residential structures-----	469
Single family structures-----	429
Two family structures-----	22
Three family structures-----	2
Rooming houses-----	0
Number of dwelling units-----	512
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	0
Legal non-conforming uses-----	0
Legal variances-----	2
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	200
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	219
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	67
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	30

Area "C" is the most intact one family residential area in Vailsburg. Although there are a few couple- and four-family structures within this area, they occur mostly in clusters, with the remainder of the area consisting of one family structures. Very few properties are deteriorated; most are relatively well maintained by occupant owners. In the absence of any clear arguments or pressures for conversion, it is suggested that this area be continued in First Residence without the option to convert.

4. Vailsburg "C" . Recommendation: First Residence  
Conversion

The entire existing First Residence District bounded generally by Varsity Road, a line 100 feet east of and parallel to Ellery Avenue, a line 100 feet north of and parallel to Ivy Street, Ellery Avenue, Ivy Street, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Ellery Avenue, a line 100 feet north of and parallel to Sandford Place, Norman Road to the Irvington line, thence along same to Sandford Avenue, Sandford Place, a line 100 feet west of and parallel to Sandford Avenue, a line 100 feet north of and parallel to Ivy Street, a line in imaginary extension of Varsity Court to Varsity Road, the point of origin, is suitable for conversion.

TABLE XI

Number of residential structures-----	409
Single family structures-----	335
Two family structures-----	59
Three family structures-----	12
Rooming houses-----	0
Number of dwelling units-----	497
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	0
Legal non-conforming uses-----	0
Legal variances-----	10
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	255
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	95
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	38
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	18

Area "D" has the very irregular Irvington and Maplewood city lines for approximately half of its boundary. Hence, the maintenance of sound zoning and land use is related to the contiguous zoning and development. Residentially the municipal boundaries do not distinguish type of structure or general condition of property. The commercial encroachments in neighboring municipalities at the Newark city line are a problem for our residential areas.

Generally, the area is used for one family dwellings but the existence of 2-1 family structures is notable. Lot sizes are generally small. While maintenance as an essentially one family area is justified, conversion might be permitted as regulated by the proposed conversion amendment.

#### Schools

Elementary schools affected in Vailsburg are Alexander Street, Lincoln and Mt. Vernon Place; Ivy Street Junior High is also located in this area. Population increase in Vailsburg has been great particularly in the Ivy Hill portion where large private housing developments have been built since 1950. The degree to which the new Mt. Vernon Place School has met increased school demands is not known. Presently, there are no new school plans for Vailsburg, with the exception of a new high school recently recommended.

## Shopping

The First Residence areas of Vailsburg are scattered in varying proximity to different store groupings. The principal community shopping street is South Orange Avenue. It has commercial uses for virtually its entire length, but, most concentrated between Sandford Avenue and Stuyvesant Avenue. Residents of Vailsburg "A", "B" and "C" areas may also shop in concentrated or individual stores on 18th, Sandford and Stuyvesant Avenues. Residents of areas "C" and "D" also shop on Mt. Vernon Place and in adjoining Maplewood along Irvington Avenue, both of which have fairly new stores. The large Ivy Hill Apartment development is not very close to either of these shopping strips so that the total retail pattern of the Ivy Hill area appears to be still in flux, with notable recent and current construction along Irvington Avenue. Any increased shopping demand in Ivy Hill may be more reflective of the general growth and development of the area rather than of any limited demand arising from whatever conversions may be permitted.

### D. Weequahic First Residence Districts:

Within Weequahic are three areas currently zoned for First Residence uses, designated as "A", "B", and "C". (See Map I.)

#### 1. Weequahic "A" - Recommendation: First Residence - No Conversion

The entire existing First Residence District bounded by the Hillside line, Maple Avenue, Chancellor Avenue, Bergen Street, Lyons Avenue and Elizabeth Avenue, the more precise boundaries of

which are quite detailed in following the interior lines of the blocks, should remain a First Residence area.

TABLE XII

Number of residential structures-----	323
Single family structures-----	290
Two family structures-----	21
Three family structures-----	7
Rooming houses-----	0
Number of dwelling units-----	369
Average number of rooms-----	7
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	7
Legal non-conforming uses-----	0
Legal variances-----	0
Lot sizes:	
under 4,000 sq. ft.-----	19
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	58
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	182
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	76

This area is one of the best preserved and most intact First Residential area in the quality housing category in the city. Except for minor vacations the First Residence zoning conforms to the actual one family use. Despite the large size of some of the structures, there is little evidence of blight or of property for sale. It is suggested that this area be continued in First Residence zoning, without the option to convert, there being no demonstrated need for conversion.

A related matter suggested for further study concerns the adjoining apartment frontage along Elizabeth Avenue opposite Weequahic Park (the four blocks between Hansbury and Goldsmith Avenues including Chancellor, Wilbur and Vassar Avenues). Consideration and study should be given this area in connection with the desired future development of the Elizabeth Avenue frontage. Should the area be developed for additional high rise apartments or

should a part of the frontage be rezoned to a lesser density. The existing 100 feet of apartment depth is inadequate for present day apartment construction and the necessary adjoining off-street parking facilities. On the other hand the general locations offers many advantages for eventual apartment development. Some of the best one family houses in Weequahic are within the First Residence District adjoining this particular Elizabeth Avenue frontage, currently zoned for Fourth Residence. The tone of the properties zoned for First Residence possibly could be enhanced by extending similar zoning to the park frontage, giving both a greater physical connection and identification with the park. No apartments now exist in this four block strip and, to our knowledge, none are imminent. The change of zone to first residence might be reassuring to the owners within the adjoining First Residential zone as well. Such a zone change could reflect the relatively stable existing condition.

2. Weequahic "B" - Recommendation: First Residence  
Conversion

The entire existing First Residence District bounded generally by Hunterdon Street and lines 100 feet, respectively, north of Lyons Avenue, west of Elizabeth Avenue and south of Mapes Avenue, should be rezoned to conversion purposes.

3. Weequahic "C" - Recommendation: First Residence  
Conversion

The entire existing First Residence District bounded by Hunterdon Street, a line 100 feet north of Mapes Avenue, the north-south portion of Shephard Avenue, a line in imaginary

easterly extension of the east-west portion of Shephard Avenue, a line 100 feet west of Elizabeth Avenue, Custer Avenue, Custer Place, a line 100 feet south of Meeler Avenue, Peshine Avenue, and Custer Avenue, is recommended for conversion zoning.

TABLE XIII

	B	C
Number of residential structures-----	70	128
Single family structures-----	63	121
Two family structures-----	6	6
Three family structures-----	1	1
Rooming houses-----	0	0
Number of dwelling units-----	78	136
Average number of rooms-----	6	6
Number of structures that cannot accommodate driveway and two off-street parking spaces-----	3	4
Legal non-conforming uses-----	0	0
Legal variances-----	0	0
Lot sizes:		
under 4,000 sq.ft.-----	5	10
4,000 to 4,999 sq.ft.-----	5	10
5,000 to 5,999 sq.ft.-----	55	113
6,000 sq.ft. and over-----	6	14

Area "B", close to Lyons Avenue, is cut off from area "C" by a Second Residential street, Mapes Avenue. The preponderant use of areas "B" and "C" is First Residence, despite the inroads of other residential types, by construction or conversion than in area "A". These include scattered 2 and 3 family houses and large structures which have been converted or where there are signs of blight and an economic justification for conversion, such as numerous properties for sale. As in certain portions of Forest Hill, areas are still predo minantly of a type suggesting conservation treatment with incidental rehabilitation. It is suggested that the zoning be maintained as First Residence, with the option to convert according to the stringent requirements recommended. Within this context, the continuance of Mapes Avenue



in separate Second Residence zoning may be unnecessary and constitute spot zoning which would impede the probably desired amalgamation of areas "B" and "C" into one contiguous First Residential zone, with conversion option.

In addition, properties along Wecker Avenue on the south side, and west of Ridgewood Avenue on the north side, appear to be in one family use. Portions of this street should be studied for possible addition to the First Residence zone, with due regard for the lower quality of structures immediately north of the Wecker Avenue frontage.

#### Schools:

Elementary schools affected in Weequahic are Peshine Avenue, Maple Avenue and Chancellor Avenue. These schools are above average for the city in their general condition. The ability of these schools to handle an increased population is fairly assured. Presumably, the recent changing population movement has most seriously affected Peshine Avenue School.

#### Shopping:

The principal business street of Weequahic is Bergen Street. The shopping area is situated close to most of the First Residence Districts. The most southerly sections of the First Residence area are near local convenience stores on Maple Avenue in Newark and Hillside. The residents of this area may also shop along North Broad Street (continuation of Elizabeth Avenue) and other streets in Hillside or at the shopping strip on upper Chancellor Avenue in Newark. No serious lack of shopping facilities is apparent.

## VII. PROPOSED ORDINANCE, FIRST RESIDENCE CONVERSION DISTRICT

The following is a suggested draft of an ordinance to create the recommended First Residence Conversion District:

### Sec. 36.3A First Residence Conversion District Regulations

1. Applicable Regulations. The regulations set forth in this section or set forth elsewhere in this ordinance (chapter) when referred to in this section, are the district regulations in the First Residence Conversion District.

2. Use Regulations. A building or premises shall be used only for the following purposes:

- a. Any use permitted in the First Residence District
- b. Two family detached dwellings converted from existing one family detached dwellings of record at the time of the effective date of this amendment, and when the following conditions are met:

(1) A lot area of not less than five thousand (5,000) square feet and a lot width of not less than fifty (50) feet and complying with all front, side and rear yard and court regulations as set forth in First Residence District Regulations.

(2) Each dwelling unit in a dwelling converted under the provision of this section shall contain complete cooking and sanitary facilities, shall be entirely self-contained and completely separated from any other dwelling unit, and shall have no space or facilities in common with another dwelling or dwelling unit except for entrance halls and utility connections.

(3) The minimum standard for overall floor area for conversion and occupancy of dwelling units under the provision shall be in accordance with Section 15.525(b)2 and otherwise

conform to the Revised Ordinances of the City of Newark.

(4) Conversions as provided above shall not include any addition to the building or any structural addition of the exterior thereof except for doors at ground floor level or windows constructed on the sides or rear of the structure.

(5) Provision of two and a maximum of four paved off-street parking spaces on the lot, constructed to the rear of the established building line.

3. Height Regulations. The Height Regulations are the same as those established for the First Residence District.

4. Special Regulations. Any dwelling erected after the effective date of this amendment, must comply with the regulations established for the First Residence District. Any existing structure converted under the above regulations must receive plan approval from the Building Inspector.

5. Off-street Parking Regulations. Provisions for off-street parking space shall be in conformity with requirements established in schedule attached to Section 23 herein.

#### VIII. CONCLUSION AND COMMENT

The present First Residence Districts selected in this report are suitable for conversion to two family use, provided certain standards are met. However, if the Board decides to recommend such rezoning and the Municipal Council approves the changes, the program can only be successful if a strict enforcement drive, to eliminate over-occupancy in these areas, is undertaken.

The conversion zone does not itself require property owners to convert their structures; rather, it gives them the option to have an additional family in the structure, if the property meets certain basic conditions and standards.

As stated in the Master Plan in 1947, "There are relatively few areas now occupied exclusively by one family homes." Since that time several of the First Residence Districts have changed considerably and are no longer what they were initially intended to be.

Conversion in such areas would be quite desirable due to the present shortage of true middle income housing. Until an adequate supply of new middle income housing can be obtained, these areas can, to a limited extent, fulfill the need of this type of housing.

To a great extent, the conversion areas can remain visually the same if the regulations are strictly enforced. The basic aim and objective of such optional conversion is to preserve these areas. Through this means, the city would develop and enforce preventive measures so that areas will not be allowed to deteriorate.

It is felt that the data presented here, relating to actual occupancy, is relatively conservative. The occupancy data is data of record and field observations. No attempt was made to seek information through mailmen, utility companies or other such sources. However, it is the staff's opinion that the occupancy data presented is reasonably accurate and conclusive.

It is suggested that after study of this report, the Board discuss the recommendations with a sub-committee of N.C.N.C.R., (as previously) since this agency is very closely concerned and interested in the conversion program.

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